

New-York Daily Tribune

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1864.

To Correspondents.
No notice can be taken of Anonymous Communications.
The name and address of the writer must be furnished for publication, and as a guarantee for his good faith.
We cannot undertake to return rejected Communications.
All business letters for this office should be addressed to "The Tribune," New-York.

Terms of the Tribune.
DAILY TRIBUNE.
Single copy, 5 cents.
Mail subscribers, one year (12 issues), \$3.
Per year (12 issues), \$3.
WEEKLY TRIBUNE.
Per year (52 issues), \$2.
Payable in advance.

Address THE TRIBUNE, New-York.

NEWS OF THE DAY.

THE WAR.

We have particulars of the attack of the Rebels upon Newbern, N. C., on the 3d instant, which show that it was quite as serious as was represented by the first dispatches, although the ultimate result was satisfactory to the Union arms, and saved Newbern from being occupied by the enemy. It appears that the Rebels advanced on the 1st instant upon our outposts at Bachelor's Creek, eight miles from Newbern, and captured them after a severe fight. A force of our cavalry was also repulsed in sight of Fort Totten. The enemy pressed closely upon our lines, and actually came within halting distance of the city. Recent dispatches received by Gen. Butler, however, informed us that the enemy was driven back to Kingston by Gen. Palmer, on the 3d inst., and that Newbern was relieved. On that evening the Rebels had possession of Newport, and cut off the connection between Newbern and Beaufort.

A dispatch received in Cincinnati from Kanawha gives particulars of the capture of Gen. Seamon and staff, and the burning of the steamer Levi. It appears that the steamer was lying at Winfield, on the west side of Kanawha River, when thirty-five guerrillas appeared on the opposite side, thirteen of whom crossed in a skiff and took possession of the boat, capturing Gen. Seamon and forty soldiers and officers, all of whom were asleep. The guerrillas afterward burned the boat. All on board were paroled except Gen. Seamon and three other officers. The prisoners were mounted and sent off into the interior. Our forces had started in pursuit of them at last accounts.

A letter from Doboy Sound, Georgia, dated Jan. 3, announces the capture by the gunboat Huron of the British ship *Sylvania*. After being repeatedly shelled and well riddled, the *Sylvania* was ashore and sunk in one fathom of water, and low tide leaves her nearly dry, and she may be repaired. She is about 400 tons burden, and is loaded with salt, spirits of all kinds, cordage, &c. She was trying to run in, and suddenly changed her mind upon seeing the *Huron*, and tried to run out. Her papers made her out to be from Nassau, N. P., and bound ostensibly to Bermuda. Her captain acknowledged that she was a blockade-runner.

By last accounts from Chattanooga we learn that Gen. Johnston, with nearly his whole force, had fallen back as far as Rome, Ga., leaving only a portion of his troops at Dalton. It was thought that Johnston either retired to that point to obtain supplies, or to prevent desertions, as between eight and nine thousand Rebels had come into the Union lines since the battle of Missionary Ridge. No anxiety for the safety of our troops at Knoxville is entertained at Chattanooga. The line of couriers between the two points is uninterrupted.

Marshal Murray arrested two recruit brokers on Friday, named H. Downer and John Crockett. Downer was charged with seducing William Brown, of the 14th Heavy Artillery, out of \$150. The Marshal sent the prisoner to Gen. Dix, in whose absence he was then ordered to be looked up by the police, but he preferred to pay \$150 into the hands of the Marshal, subject to the order of Gen. Dix. Brown, the recruit, has a wife and seven children. Crockett was sent to Fort Lafayette.

A project has originated at West Point to erect there a "Battle Monument," upon which shall be inscribed the names of all officers of the Regular Army who shall have been killed or died of wounds received in the field during the present war. The expense of the monument is to be defrayed by a sliding scale of taxation upon the officers of the Regular Army—\$27 for a Major-General, down to \$5 for a Lieutenant. Col. Bowman is President, and Prof. Church Treasurer of the Association.

The case of the Chesapeake has at length been decided in the Admiralty Court at Halifax, N. S. The Judge declared that the vessel and cargo should be restored to her owners, subject to such conditions respecting the payment of the expenses as the Attorney-General may exact. The latter demands security against latent claims, which the owners and agents of the vessel deny.

A letter from Charlotte Harbor, Fla., of Jan. 29, says that an expedition, under Gen. Woodbury, had arrived at Punta Rosa for the purpose of cutting off the supply of beefs, which the Rebels are receiving from that region at the rate of 1,500 per week.

On Saturday morning a reconnaissance in force from the Army of the Potomac started toward the Rapidan. Considerable firing took place at Norton's Ford during the day, and at 9 p.m. market firing began, and continued until dark.

A new and fast blockade-runner, the *Wild Darrell*, was destroyed at New-Topsail Island, N. C., not long since, by the *Sassaqua* and the *Fleet*. The victim had got ashore, and was landing her cargo.

Refugees from East Tennessee are daily arriving in Nashville. Scarcity of provisions has compelled them to leave. The country has been pretty well swept of supplies by the contending armies.

Richmond papers to the 3d report the blockade-running steamer *Proctor* ashore on Sullivan's Island, and likely to be entirely lost under the Union firing. Part of the cargo will be saved.

A skirmish occurred recently in Jackson County, Mo., between Capt. Coleman's Union command and about 100 guerrillas, supposed to be a part of Quantrill's old force.

The Rebels made a series of attempts to capture Cumberland Gap on Friday and Saturday, 29th and 30th ult., but they were repulsed by Col. Lore with a strong force.

Illinois boasts that she has furnished, up to Jan. 1, all the men required of her under all calls up to that period.

A locomotive and five cars ran through the draw of the Long Bridge at Washington on Saturday. One soldier was killed and ten or twelve wounded.

LEGISLATURE.

ASSEMBLY, Feb. 6.—The bill known as the General Bounty bill, which received the sanction of the Senate on Wednesday, was passed. This is a different bill from that which passed the Assembly on Friday and the Senate on Thursday, which latter specially applied to New-York County, while the one which became a law in the Assembly to-day legalizes the action of local authorities generally throughout the State in raising money to pay volunteer bounties and furnish relief to the families of soldiers. The bill authorizes City, County, and Town Governments to expend such amounts of money as they may deem proper for the purpose of filling their various quotas in the armies of the Republic. The bill providing for a uniform State bounty of \$300, in lieu of the local bounties, was laid on the table. Among the measures introduced was a new Health bill for the Metropolitan District; an amendment to the Metropolitan Police bill, which consists of the insertion of the names of Daniel D. T. Marshall, Joseph S. Bosworth, Anthony P. Campbell and William McMurtry, as Commissioners, instead of those previously announced, and bills for the better organization of the First Division of the National Guard, and relative to the District and Marine Courts of this city.

only announced, and bills for the better organization of the First Division of the National Guard, and relative to the District and Marine Courts of this city.

GENERAL NEWS.

The steamship *Columbia*, from New-Orleans, Jan. 30, arrived on Saturday afternoon. The approaching election of State officers is the all-engrossing theme in Louisiana, and the political barometer is at fever heat. The Nominating Convention was to meet on the 3d inst. It was thought that the Hon. Michael Hahn has the best show for the nomination for Governor, although District-Attorney Waples was prominently mentioned. T. J. Fashier was spoken of for Attorney-General, and Robert Montgomery for Treasurer. There were evident preparations for a military movement, but where the intended blow should be struck was not made known.

The Ocean Queen, from Panama Jan. 29, arrived here on Saturday evening. The war between the United States of Colombia and Ecuador was over, peace having been restored by a treaty of Dec. 30. According to an additional arrangement, free trade is to be established between the two Republics. Spain is threatening Peru with hostilities on account of some Spanish colonists having been murdered by Peruvians. The Government of Chili has passed some police regulations for ecclesiastical edifies, to prevent the recurrence of disorders like that of Dec. 8. On Dec. 21 a similar calamity had nearly befallen Santiago in another church.

At a meeting of the "Unconditional Union Central Committee" of this city, on Saturday evening, their organization was perfected by the election of the following officers: President, Adam C. Ellis; Vice-Presidents, B. F. Mudgett, Charles Gould, W. T. B. Miliken, Andrew Williams; Recording Secretaries, H. C. Barber, A. N. Lewis; Corresponding Secretary, E. C. Steadman; Treasurer, J. B. Robinson. There is to be a club in each Ward, having one representative in the Central Committee and one additional representative for each 100 votes cast for James S. Wadsworth for Governor in 1862.

An accident occurred on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad a few days ago. During the night a tree was blown down across the track, and a freight train coming in, having no warning of the danger ahead, ran into the tree. One of the cars, on which a gentleman from East Tennessee, with his wife and five children, had taken passage, was knocked to pieces. The gentleman, his wife and three of the children were killed. The two surviving children are without protectors.

By the arrival of the *Columbia* we have dates from Havana to Feb. 2, and from Mexico to Jan. 21. The news from Mexico is not important. The report that Aguascalientes and Zacatecas had been occupied by French troops proved to be premature. It is said that at a council of Spanish generals held at Havana it was resolved to memorialize the Spanish Government to give up Santo Domingo.

The Union Convention at Little Rock has nominated Judge Isaac Murphy for Provisional Governor, and have organized a Provisional State Government. Its proceedings are to be submitted to a vote of the people in May next. County officers will be elected in many parts of the State in March.

The six-story building known as the Empire Works, situated between First Avenue and Avenue A, and extending from Twenty-fourth to Twenty-fifth streets, was completely destroyed by fire on Saturday night, inflicting a loss of over \$150,000. Between 400 and 500 persons are thrown out of employment.

Gold is higher and closes at 154½-155½. The exports for the week have been about \$1,200,000. The excitement in Stocks continues unabated and prices have been pushed up strongly on the street, which has been crowded with speculators. The Stock Market continues strong with an upward tendency. Governments keep firm and are wanted not only by investors but by speculators, tempted by the interest made by gold-bearing stocks. Money has been abundant at 7 per cent on call among brokers, and the offerings of this rate by large lenders among banks have exceeded the wants of the street.

OUR CITY.

A most respectable Committee, headed by Hamilton Fish, has issued an Address in behalf of an Association of such as themselves to the Tax-payers and Voters of our City. Every statement embodied in this Address is at once true and startling—or rather, would be startling, if any development of official corruption and abuse had power, now or hereafter, to amaze or alarm. Ours is one of the freest, most intelligent, most busy, most prosperous of the world's great cities; and its Government is the corruptest, most expensive, most rascally, that was ever known. We are already called on for Thirteen and a Half Millions of Dollars for the next year's expenditures, and nobody doubts that this sum will yet be swelled to somewhere between Fourteen and Fifteen Millions. On every hand is exhibited one uniform spectacle of extravagance, waste, and robbery. When our City had more than Two Hundred Thousand People, her annual tax-bill was One Million Dollars; now, her population is (at most) One Million, and her tax-bill at least Fourteen Millions; so that while population has increased five-fold, Taxation has been swelled fourteen-fold. And, while our Public Debt in 1855—long after the completion of our only great city enterprises (the Croton Water Works)—was but Fourteen Millions, it is now not a cent less than Thirty Millions, and is still rolling up with frightful rapidity. True, the City possesses Real Estate honestly worth Forty Millions, whereof enough ought to be sold within five years to pay our entire debt, but we are scarcely realizing enough to pay the cost of managing it. And, while we are paying Half a Million a year for not having our streets swept, they ought to be thoroughly swept for half that sum, in addition to the amount that ought to be realized from the sale of the sweepings.

The Committee estimate that ten thousand human lives are annually sacrificed in this City to filth and bad government. They do not choose to say that slaughtering cattle in the very heart of our most crowded sections is one main cause of this fearful mortality; but it is the fact; and such slaughtering is at once pestilential and wasteful; since the blood and offal which should fertilize the farms are here not merely useless but fruitful causes of malaria and death.

"But what do you propose to do about it?" Here is just where the Address seems to us lame. The people do not need to be told that they are abominably abused, misgoverned, plundered by their municipal rulers; they know all this better than they do their creeds or catechisms. They only want to be shown their way out of the abyss. The Committee say that our Charter needs amendment—that "ten eminent citizens, qualified by experience and mature judgment to frame improvements" might make it a good deal better than it is. Very well, then: why not designate such citizens and urge them to undertake the work? Let us do what they have omitted, and propose that ex-Mayors Kingsland, Westervelt, Tiemann, and Opdyke—all, we believe, now in private life—be asked to undertake the work,

and to associate with themselves such other citizens of high character and ripe experience in our municipal affairs as qualify them for the task. There must be, out of our two or three hundred ex-Aldermen, half a dozen who did not steal while in office; let the three ablest of these be invited to aid in this work; and let ex-Judges, &c., of high character complete the list. And let us conclude by barely indicating the Reforms which seem to us most important and indispensable, viz:

1. The sale by auction within three years of all City property for which there is no present Municipal use;

2. The extension from our City of the Cattle-Market and the entire business of slaughtering animals; having it done at some point say fifteen miles away, but closely connected with it by railroad and steamboat;

3. A paid Fire Department with the most effective Steam Apparatus; all tipping, gambling, and lewdness to be carefully excluded from the engine-houses;

4. One great, spacious Public Market, in the most advantageous locality—a market wherein consumers could meet and deal with producers, and no middlemen enjoy exclusive privileges; all other Markets to be private enterprises, and all our present Market property to be sold by auction to the highest bidder;

5. All City Piers and Wharves to be sold to the highest bidder, but under careful limitations as to their charges;

6. All Printing for the City to be done by contract with the lowest responsible bidder; three leading printers, who do not compete for it, to decide which bid is lowest;

7. The proceedings of our Common Council, Board of Supervisors, School Commissioners, &c., to be fully reported and printed in the journal of largest circulation which will so report and print them for the (State) legal rates of Advertising, and nowhere else at the public cost. Election notices, official canvasses, and other City advertisements of general interest, to be printed in the four English and one German daily of largest circulation, and nowhere else at the public cost;

8. The number of City officials and their respective salaries to be fixed by the Charter; no new place to be created and no salary to be raised but by a specific amendment thereof. One-horse Judges who serve two hours per day semi-occasionally in our Ward Courts not to be paid more per annum than the average judicial compensation of Kent, Hoffman and Oakley.

—Such are some hasty suggestions of City Reform supplementary to those of the Committee, whom we entreat to persevere in their work, and increase in energy and boldness.

THE ENROLLMENT ACT AND THE SUPREME COURT.

An insurrectionary journal in this city once more proposes that the Enrollment Act shall be tested before the Supreme Court of the United States, as a condition precedent to its execution, by a made up case between the President and Governor Seymour. The proposition betrays an ignorance of the character and functions of the Judiciary, and of the ordinary presumptions of law concerning acts of Congress. It assumes that the Judiciary is part of the law-making power; that an act of Congress has no real validity until its constitutionality has been affirmed by the Supreme Court; and that the people have the right, if it be not their duty, to resist the enforcement of any law which a decision of that Court has not sanctioned. If the naked statement of such a proposition is absurd, it is the fault of those who have heretofore urged it—not ours.

We trust it will not be thought impertinent if we suggest to the "Conservatives" who favor this proposition that they should really read the Constitution, and endeavor to comprehend the elementary principles which it embodies. Article I, Section 1, is this:

"All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives."

All legislative powers are vested in Congress; and Congress consists of a Senate and House of Representatives; and the Supreme Court does not constitute any part of it, nor is invested with any legislative functions whatever. In the 7th section of the same article it is provided that a bill, before it become a law, shall be approved by the President, or, if vetoed, shall be repassed by two-thirds of each House; but it is nowhere provided that it shall be submitted to the Supreme Court. A bill once passed by Congress and approved by the President is a law, and the Constitution enjoins upon the President to take care that it be faithfully executed.

But a law does sometimes come before the Supreme Court? Yes, in this way. The first section of the third article of the Constitution vests the judicial—not legislative—power of the United States in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as Congress may establish. The second and third sections define with precision the limits of this judicial power. It is declared to extend to certain enumerated "cases," and "controversies"; and it does not extend to any others. The Supreme Court has no control over the legislation, or laws of the Union, except such as it gets incidentally, and indirectly. Its proper business, like that of other Courts, is to decide the cases which come before it in the regular administration of justice. Those cases sometimes depend upon the construction or upon the validity of certain statutes, and if in order justly to determine the cause, it is necessary to pass upon the statute, it is often the duty of the Court to examine into the constitutionality of the statute. And there is no other way in which a constitutional question can legally be presented to the Court, or in which the Court can assume a political jurisdiction.

The Supreme Court differs in this respect from the tribunals of other countries. In England, for instance, an Act of Parliament is binding upon the Courts absolutely. They have no power to question its validity; they must interpret it, apply it to the facts of a given case, and obey it. Parliament is supreme. But in the United States the Constitution is supreme, and an Act of Congress has no legal force or validity if it contravenes any provision of the

Constitution. Nevertheless the Judiciary has properly no supervisory power over Congress. Both derive their authority from the Constitution and neither is subordinate to the other. While a law is not contested, while no "case" involving it is before the Court, there is nothing to warrant interference. Congress may pass fifty unconstitutional acts and every one of them lies utterly beyond the reach of the Supreme Court, till for the determination of some judicial controversy it becomes necessary to decide that the statute is, or is not, constitutional.

It follows from this exposition—and it is also a maxim of law—that an act of Congress is presumed to be constitutional until the Supreme Court has judicially declared that it is unconstitutional. Whoever disobeys an act of Congress, does it at his peril. All presumptions are against him. It is the duty of the Executive to enforce the laws, and it is not his duty to wait before enforcing them till some case has arisen which may give the Supreme Court an opportunity of expressing its opinion concerning them. There are hundreds of laws to-day on the statute book which have never been, and which never will be, pronounced constitutional by the Supreme Court, or by any other tribunal. Yet nobody thinks of refusing to obey them.

Nothing, then, could be more absurd or more unconstitutional than the proposition that the President and Governor Seymour should become parties to a fictitious case in order to procure the opinion of the Supreme Court upon the Enrollment Act. The Court could not entertain such a case. It has repeatedly declared that it will pass upon no questions except such as are necessary to determine cases regularly presented for adjudication. It has more than once stricken cases from its docket on the suspicion that they were made up by agreement. If it goes beyond its proper jurisdiction, and pronounces upon statutes which it is not necessary to consider in order to decide a pending case, such opinions are not law, are not conclusive upon inferior tribunals, and are not entitled to respect. Witness the contempt with which the Dred Scott case has been received by the country. That was not in any proper sense a judicial decision, but is a mass of *obiter dicta* throughout, and the opinions are the opinions of Roger B. Taney, not of the Supreme Court. We want no more such. We have a respect for this tribunal so profound that we do not desire that it should usurp functions which do not belong to it.

As for the Enrollment act, we have no doubt of its constitutionality, and no doubt that the Supreme Court would affirm it. The act has again and again been declared constitutional by courts of inferior jurisdiction—by both State and United States tribunals. Very recently the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in a decision which is a monument of learning and ability, has affirmed its validity. The Court of Appeals in this State would certainly pronounce a similar decision—and we may remark in passing that the judgment of that Court would be sufficient to control the official action of Governor Seymour. But there is no reason for anticipating or accelerating the decision of this or of any other tribunal. The Enrollment act is to be regarded for the present as a law, essential to the welfare of the country and the suppression of the Rebellion, and therefore to be promptly enforced by the Executive.

We have no apprehensions that any such proposition as is suggested will be considered at Washington. What we deem mischievous and desire to counteract by this plain statement of very familiar principles is the persistent effort to undermine the public respect for law by disseminating the opinion that all laws depend on the Courts for their validity, and that until a law is declared constitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States it is at the option of each individual to render or withhold obedience to it. In the ordinary course of judicial administration it must be years before an act of Congress can come before that Court. Are we meanwhile to have an angry discussion, a suspension of obedience, and perhaps an armed resistance to its enforcement? No loyal man will advocate such an anarchy as that, yet it would be the inevitable result of the general adoption of the views which are urged in many Democratic journals against the execution of the Enrollment act.

We exhort all good citizens to turn from such counsels; to recognize the legislation of Congress as constitutional until it is declared otherwise, and to render a cheerful obedience to the law regardless of doubts as to its expediency or its constitutionality.

MARYLAND.

Two years ago, Maryland, like Missouri, was requested, solicited, almost entreated, to emancipate her slaves in her own time and manner, and accept compensation therefor from the Federal Treasury. The proposition was rejected by her Union Legislature, after having been voted against by her Union Members of Congress. Now, Emancipation is "marching on," both in Maryland and Missouri, and the Pro-Slavery party of 1862 plead for Gradual and Compensated Emancipation in 1864; but the response is "too late! you would not accept Compensation when it was offered; now you cannot have it."

The *Baltimore American* frankly tells the slaveholders and their remaining adherents that all that is needed is the repeal of certain vicious and obsolete laws to make Maryland a Free State. We beg the Unionists of other States wherein Slavery still lingers to bear this truth in mind. Slavery can be abolished by a simple legislative act repealing, in one section, all the laws which authorize one man to compel another to work for him without wages, or to sell that other's wife and children. Slavery originates in force, but is upheld and perpetuated by what are inaccurately termed laws. Repeal these laws, and each slaveholder who seeks to coerce his late chattel becomes a law-breaker, and renders himself liable to an action for assault, if not for felony. Here is a hint whereby Kentucky may yet profit.

The Maryland Convention bill still hangs on a disagreement between the two Houses. The slaveholders bravely at least delay, and thus obtain it. But it is not probable that any adjournment will be voted until the bill has been

perfected and passed. Possibly, the Slavery party may do, as their brethren in Missouri have done—postpone, by a close vote, the Convention till next November, in the desperate hope that something may meantime turn up whereby they may still save their falling idol. They will be disappointed.

Last Fall's contest was, in most Counties, between the "Union" and the "Unconditional Union" organizations—the latter being openly and thoroughly Anti-Slavery—the former, as Anti-Slavery as they were obliged to be. "Unconditional Union" carried the day decidedly; so the other sort has concluded to dissolve—liquidate—and merge itself in its triumphant rival; which calls the People to hold Primary Meetings on the 13th inst. and choose Delegates to a State Convention which will assemble in Baltimore on the 22d, there to choose Delegates to the prospective "National Union Convention" to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President; but its more immediate and important purpose is to prepare for the Constitutional Election which the Legislature is expected to inaugurate.

Maryland is evidently a healthy and growing State.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS IN RUSSIA.

The speech which the Emperor Alexander opened last year the Diet of Finland, led to the expectation that constitutional reforms for other parts of the Russian Empire were in course of preparation. The official organ of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg repeatedly confirmed this belief, and announced that a kind of representative constitution would be given to the provinces of the Empire. We now learn from the official organ, that an Imperial phase has been published for the organization of the provincial and district representations of Russia, with the exception of the Western and Baltic provinces, Archangel, Astracan, and Bessarabia.

This step inaugurates the reign of constitutional monarchy in Russia. The rights of the people, conferred by the Imperial ukase, will be few compared with those enjoyed by other European nations; still it is a step toward a most important reform in the largest of all European empires. The bulk of the Russian population has been hitherto an unthinking mass, as the small number of books and papers published in Russia clearly shows. The introduction of a representative constitution will, of course, greatly contribute to the education of the whole people, and will thus have a marked influence upon the destiny of Europe.

The Unconditional Union Club, which has recently been organized in our City, held its first public meeting on Saturday evening. It is designed to be progressive and uncompromising, and to aid the Republic in every way in its mortal struggle with its arch-enemy, Slavery. Ward organizations, auxiliary to the central, have been made in some wards already, and will be in others. We give a report elsewhere.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune. WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 1864.

FROM THE FRONT—A RECONNOISSANCE.
A reconnoissance in force of cavalry and three corps of infantry, left their camps yesterday morning, and moved toward the Rapidan. It is thought that fighting will take place, though this depends upon the action of the enemy. Gen. Sedgwick is now in command.

THE PERCENTAGE ON QUARTERMASTERS' CHECKS.
The Treasury Department have decided to pay, hereafter, 50 per cent on Quartermasters' checks, instead of 75 per cent, in certificates of indebtedness, and the balance in Five per cent Treasury notes—this to go into effect to-morrow.

SURGEON-GENERAL HAMMOND.
Surg.-Gen. Hammond has so far recovered from the effects of his fall at Nashville as to be able to walk again. The Court-Martial in his case proceeds but slowly, the testimony of medical storekeepers being about completed.

THE COLORED TROOPS NEAR NORFOLK.
A gentleman just from Norfolk gives a very encouraging account of the colored troops in that vicinity, both infantry and cavalry. They are improving rapidly in drill and discipline, and in point of efficiency will soon equal the white troops. About 20,000 contrabands are gathered around there who are engaged in farming, raising cotton, &c.

The great trouble experienced is that too many sentimentalists and too few practical men are sent out to aid in educating and taking care of the negro.

ARKANSAS.

Col. Johnson of Arkansas has arrived here as Delegate from the Union Convention recently held.

CODIFICATION OF NAVAL LAWS.

The codification of the naval laws, rules and regulations, by the Hon. Charles B. Sedgwick, Commissioner, is rapidly approaching completion and will be finished during the week. A report will be made to Congress, under whose authority the Commissioner was appointed. The work has proved one of greater magnitude than was at first supposed, but the causes of delay prove the necessity of the work.

BANQUET TO MINNESOTA SOLDIERS.

The Minnesotians in the city gave a banquet last evening at the National Hotel to the 1st Minnesota Regiment Volunteers, which proved a decided success. This regiment is stated to be the oldest now in the service. Vice-President Hamlin, Secretaries Stanton and Ulster, and a number of Senators and Representatives were present. The Emancipation Proclamation, Colored Soldiers and the Extinction of Slavery were heartily endorsed. A letter from Secretary Chase was read and received with hearty cheers.

REORGANIZATION OF THE CAVALRY FORCE.

Gen. J. H. Wilson, the new Chief of the Cavalry Bureau, is devoting his energies and acknowledged executive ability to the thorough reorganization of the cavalry force, in view of the Spring campaign. Horses of the best quality are being accumulated, and an order is about issuing that no more cavalry regiments shall be organized until the veteran regiments in the field have been filled up to their full quotas.

SEA-COAST FORTIFICATIONS.

A Board of Engineers, consisting of Gens. Bernard G. W. Cullum, Lieut.-Col. Alexander, and one other officer, is now in session for the purpose of thoroughly revising the system of sea-coast fortifications, in view of the new system of ordnance and the new means of attack by iron-clad vessels. This is one of the most important Boards of the war, and its report will be looked for with interest by military men of all countries. In every respect the system of army organization, as one of the exact sciences, is becoming understood, and before another year, our army, lately a heterogeneous assemblage of an army of gullible but undisciplined citizens, will be the model army of the world, with its laws and organizations looked up to as the standard result of the vastest military experience.

LAND GRANTS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

It has been the general policy of Congress in

making provisions in 1862 for educational purposes to order selections to be made during the existence of the community as a Territory, and to hold the fee simple in fee until the Territory becomes a State, and then to confer the grant. It is understood that selections for university purposes in Washington Territory have been added by the Territorial authorities, thus to private individuals under a misconception of the law, under the impression that said authorities had a power to dispose of the lands in fee, and application is now pending before Congress to afford relief by a substitute, vesting a complete title in the Territory and its vendees, in such cases.

To the Associated Press. WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 1864.

CAUSES IN THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT.
In the Supreme Court of the United States, the causes argued the past week, in which *Green v. Brown* and others are complainants and the *La Crosse* and *Milwaukee Railroad Company* respondents, will be continued this week, after which will be taken up, No. 123, *The State Bank of Indiana v. Henry Yallett*, No. 125, *Thomas O. Gayard, Jr., et al., appellants v. Ida Ketchum et al.*, No. 126, *The Pacific Mail Steamship Company, plaintiffs v. error, appt. Wm. H. Joffe*. These will be followed by other California cases.

The Election of U. S. Senator for Kansas—Gen. Blunt to have Command of the Indian Territory District—He is to be Provided with an Offensive Army.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 1864.

Private information received to-day from Kansas states that the Legislature of that State yesterday agreed to go into an election for a United States Senator on Tuesday, in place of Gen. Lane, notwithstanding the fact that the majority of the present Legislature were elected with a distinct understanding that no election should take place during the present term or before the next Legislature should assemble next Winter. Gen. Lane's term expires on the 4th March, 1865. Maj.-Gen. Blunt will leave for Gen. Curtis' Department to-morrow. He is to have command of the District of the Indian Territory, with his headquarters at Fort Smith, and he will be supplied with an ample army not only for defensive but offensive operations.

Destruction of a Blockade-Runner.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 1864.

The following dispatch was received at the Navy department this morning:

U. S. FLAGSHIP MINNESOTA, OFF NEWPORT NEWS, February 6, 1864.
Hon. GIBSON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy.
The supply steamer *Nevers* has arrived. The *Sassaqua*, Lieut. Commodore Roe, and the Florida, Commodore Crocker, have destroyed the new and fast blockade-runner *Wild Dayrell*, near New Topsail Island, where she had got ashore, and discharged most of her cargo. Acting-Rear-Admiral and Comd'g U. S. A. B. S., &c.

Dinner to Gen. Burnside.

BOSTON, Saturday, Feb. 6, 1864.

A number of distinguished citizens gave a complimentary dinner to Maj.-Gen. Burnside at the Bay View House, last evening. A. H. Bolles, Speaker of the House, presided.

The Burning of the Steamer Tyler.

LOUISVILLE, Saturday, Feb. 6, 1864.

Parties supposed to be implicated in setting fire to the steamer *Tyler* have been arrested by the military authorities. Their names are John Clark of Louisville, Augustus Orrell and S. H. Waite and wife of St. Louis, and Della Halford and Jennie Reed, the two latter minutiae. They have been a long time running slaves from, and kidnapping free negroes in Missouri, and setting them here as slaves.

Activity at the Charleston Navy-Yard.

BOSTON, N. Y., Feb. 7, 1864.

There is great activity at the Charleston Navy-Yard in fitting out vessels for Fort Monroe. The gunboat *Malvern* leaves to-morrow evening.

From Colorado.

DENVER CITY, Friday, Feb. 5, 1864.

The Legislature organized in Golden City on Tuesday. The Governor's Message shows that Colorado is out of debt. The relations with the Indian tribes are satisfactory. The mines have quadrupled in value during the past year. Agriculture is increasing rapidly, and should Colorado not succeed in getting the Pacific Railroad, the entire extent of the territory from east to west, the Governor expects that the energies of the people will be brought to bear in cooperating with branches from Kansas City and Atchison for their extension to the heart of the Territory. The Message closes with eminently patriotic allusions to Federal affairs.

Robbery in Orange, N. J.

ORANGE, N. J., Feb. 7,